

Welcome to the Emotional Cycles of Separation Awareness Training.

This training has been informed in liaison with partners of The MLG (Education) Group, Armed Forces personnel, the national framework GIRFEC and includes the voices of Highlands Children and Young People.

MLG (Education) is a Highland Council partnership.

References and links to information, resources and research contained within this training can be found on Slide 17.

This training session has a specific focus on Armed Forces Families and particularly their Children and Young People. The loss and emotional impact felt by children who experience any significant separation, due to a deployment or extended training exercise, from those who care for them and who they care about, can be similar to other situations and so the messages have implications universally for all children and young people.

For those children and young people who may have a parent or sibling away on training, exercise, weekending or deployment, these separations can be felt very acutely. Deployment, in particular, does have its unique characteristics and you will have an opportunity to learn more about this as you move through the slides. Most children will experience some emotional impact around parental deployment/separation. For some this may have a lesser impact and they may deal with it reasonably well due to their resilience, for others, the impact may be much more significant. Every child and their circumstances are unique. It is often how the adults around them connect, respond and support that has the greatest effect on the children and supports developing a pupil's resilience: building on their strengths and their protective factors.

The six areas of a child's life where resilience can be promoted are: a secure base, education, friendships, talents and interests, positive values and social competence. It is likely that in resilient children **one domain of resilience is likely to positively impact on another**.

The three fundamental building blocks of resilience are:

- 1. A secure base, whereby a child feels a sense of belonging and security (BELONGING)
- 2. Good internal sense of worth and competence (SELF)
- 3. A sense of self-efficacy, that is, a sense of mastery and control (to achieve one's own goals), along with an accurate understanding of personal strengths and limitations. (POWER/AGENCY)

Although it may not always be possible to protect young people from difficulties and challenges, boosting their resilience helps towards enhancing the likelihood of better outcomes. It is therefore helpful to think about how to build positive experiences and outcomes to potentially buffer the impact of more challenging situations.

This brief online training session will provide some awareness of the possible impacts of deployment/separation and may help you to reflect and consider your strategies of support as appropriate to the needs of your pupils.

A face to face or virtual training session is available. If interested, please contact MLG (Education) lead, Lou Kinnear: louise.kinnear2@highland.gov.uk



<u>The Military Liaison Group (Education) - Support for Children and Young People</u> <u>from Highlands Armed Forces Families within an educational context</u>

There is a wide network of support for Highland's Armed Forces Families that may be helpful for you, your team and Armed Forces Families to be aware of.

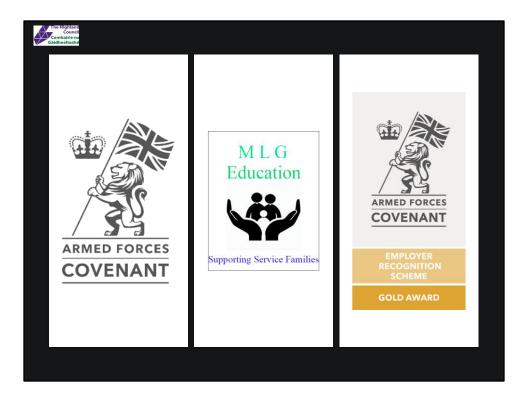
MLG (Education) supports children of Armed Forces Families in an educational context Highland wide. It is a vehicle with the vision "for understanding and supporting the needs of the Service Community and the local area in an educational context". It aims to ensure equity and equality for Children and Young People from Armed Forces families, within an educational context.

MLG (Education) <u>Core Partners</u> are made up of representatives from Highland Council's Positive Relationships Team, 3SCOTS Unit Welfare, 7SCOTS Reservist, Veterans through Poppyscotland, The Army Welfare Service, Tri-Service Family Federations, a local Councillor who is the Armed Forces champion, Skills Development Scotland, Forces Children Scotland and representatives from Further Education, Secondary, Primary and Early Years Education settings.

Highland continues to build closer relationships with their Armed Forces Community encouraging understanding, participation, inclusion and promoting positive engagement and integration. The Rights of the Child (UNCRC) are embedded within

the work of MLG (Education).

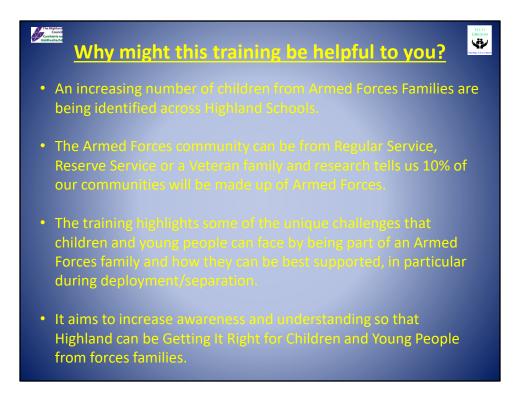
The MLG (Education) logo was designed by a pupil from Alness Academy and really supports the message and vision of the group and Highland are proud to have MLG (Education) represented by this logo.



Highland Council has signed their own Armed Forces Covenant and are proud to have received the Gold status award for its commitment, support and positive work in support of Highland's Armed Forces community.

The Covenant is a statement, a promise, of support between the Armed Forces and the Civilian Community. It aims to encourage support for the Armed Forces Community in Highland and raise awareness of issues affecting Service personnel.

Those who serve in the Armed Forces and their families, whether Regular Service, Reserve Service or Veteran should face no disadvantage (for example, due to high levels of mobility, interrupted learning, mid year moves etc).



It is helpful to have an awareness of the possible impacts and some of the strategies to support Children and Young People from Armed Forces families. Creating awareness provides understanding of the challenges so when needed adjustments and targeted support where needed, can be put in place to support the different ways Children and Young People might experience separation due to deployment or long training exercises.

Military life, in particular deployment/separation, can, at times, be hard to predict. Information regarding deployment/separation can at times, due to the sensitivity of MOD, be restricted and therefore we may not always be fully aware of all of the impacts. However, due to the strength of partnership with Highland's Armed Forces personnel, information sharing where possible is provided so Educators and Practitioners are able at key times to increase where needed targeted support and continue to focus on developing our pupils' resilience: building on their strengths and protective factors during challenging times.

Our Armed Forces families are "Tri Service".

This means they could be from The Royal Navy, The Army, or The RAF and either a Regular, a Reserve or a Veteran/ex-service.

Highland has children from Regular Service personnel largely clustered around the Millburn, Culloden and IRA patches of Inverness. However, there is an ever increasing

amount of families who are now more dispersed across Highland and also an increase in weekending (serving person living away during the week and returning at weekends). It is important to note there is also a wide spread of Reserve Service and Veterans throughout Highland.

To some extent, there is more support for those Army families from 3SCOTS based in Inverness, as they are largely based close together, than there is for a single Reservist somewhere else in Highland, or for a Veteran, who has settled away from other Armed Forces Families. However due to the strength of MLG's partnership it can provide guidance, advice or signpost to the specific support that may be needed for that Child or Young Person or their family.

Highland's Community Planning Partnerships are becoming increasingly more aware and knowledgeable about their Armed Forces Communities and further development work with these groups is on-going to promote understanding, engagement and integration and encourage consideration within their Locality, Adult and Child Plan's.



If we know a Child or Young Person is from an Armed Forces Family we can help.

We can support your education setting to have a greater awareness of being from an Armed Forces family and to get the right targeted support to a pupil at the right time when needed, especially at times of deployment/separation.

We know most of our Children and Young People will be ok, however some may need some additional support at certain times:

- during times of separation/deployment
- if the Regular Service parent is "weekending" and away during the working week.
- If they are a young carer from a veteran family
- increased responsibilities when a Regular Service parent is away

Currently Highland has +940 Children and Young People from Armed Forces families identified and recorded on SEEMiS. This figure has gradually increased due to the ongoing work to encourage identification however, we know this figure is very under reported.

Education settings are key to supporting identification at times of Enrolment.

Enrolment Forms ask specific questions to encourage identification and education settings are asked to encourage this section of the enrolment form to be completed.

There is a link on the Enrolment form (or hard copies should be made available) "Why do we want to know?". A link to this leaflet can be found on Slide 17 or can be accessed through Highland Council's Armed Forces website.

Other opportunities that may encourage identification are through Education settings are Newsletter/Blog, parents evenings, parent council, noticeboards etc., as well as signposting the Highland Council Armed Forces website. Schools can access this site direct through the Schools Hub via the tab "Getting It Right for Children from Armed Forces Families". All schools should receive the quarterly MLG Newsletter which provides information, updates and resources of support. Head Teachers receive this Newsletter for circulation for staff and across their School communities.

Recording all pupils from Armed Forces Families on SEEMIS is important to enable us to have up to date data of the numbers and spread of children from Armed Forces Families who may require and be entitled to support. If we know which education settings they attend we can provide support.

We continue to ask Early Years settings, Schools and Partner Centres to record any pupil from an Armed Forces Families on SEEMiS, so a more accurate picture can be understood. This is emphasised in the Manager/Head Teacher Enrolment Guidance in all settings. Record on SEEMiS on the tab that has been set up for Highland Council named "Armed Forces L&T Tab" <u>NOT</u> the general "Armed Forces" tab.

It is important to note that all Children and Young People are All Highland's Children and will be supported within the Highland Practice Model. However research supports that this group has specific and at times unique needs which we need to be aware of and familiarise ourselves with. The Covenant supports and enables Children and Young People from Armed Forces Families to access a "Fast Track" service for professional services ensuring they suffer no disadvantage due to the impact of military life (Regular Service families and Veteran families). For example if a pupil has been accessing Speech and Language therapy in their previous school, on arrival in Highland they will be "fast tracked" as a priority to continue at the same level with this support.



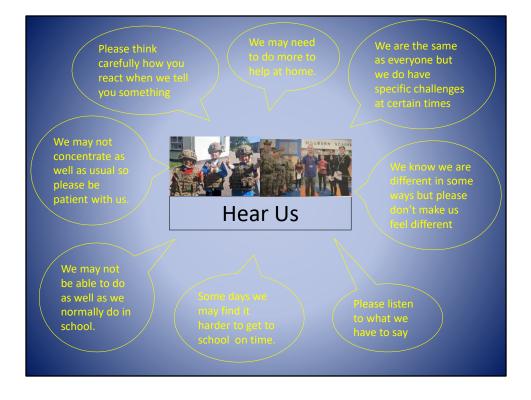
This video was produced by ADES (Association of Directors in Scotland) in conjunction with Forces Children Education

It highlights key information from both children of Armed Forces Families and professionals around service life, separation and education transitions.

Please pause this power point and click the link on the slide to watch this video or click the picture to access the video via the Forces Children Education website.

A training support pack to accompany this film can be accessed here: https://forceschildrenseducation.org.uk/educators/training-pack

You may want to take time to reflect on the key messages from this video before moving on.



Thoughts, behaviours and responses will be influenced by a Child or Young Person's emotional and physical environments, their experiences and the level of stress they are exposed to.

We know that early attachment, nurturing experiences and emotional and physical environments affect wellbeing, self-esteem, resilience and in turn levels of emotional literacy..

Take a moment to consider the statements in this slide.

- Consider how these may manifest themselves potentially in your setting.
- Consider how you might support these needs and promote a sense of self, sense of belonging and sense of power (control) for the Child or Young Person

Families (parents and siblings) respond and cope in different ways depending on their particular situation, family dynamics, strengths and pressures. The length of a deployment, place of a deployment and nature of a deployment may influence and impact on levels of family and individual wellbeing and resilience. Therefore how each family works together in the preparation and organisation of a loved one leaving is unique to them and should be respected.

During a deployment or separation increasing support and communication between home and school is key and reinforces understanding with the whole family and their situation. This shared communication helps to ensure the right adjustments can be planned and made to meet the needs of the Child or Young Person during these times and be shared with the staff in your setting.

Children and Young People will seek to get their wellbeing needs met, consciously and subconsciously, to re stabilise themselves. Depending on the Child or Young Person's ability to look after and regulate these their feelings they may communicate in ways that are 'not the norm' to get their needs met.

Additionally external factors may impact on the parent/carer left at home : school, social, money, housing, daily living, chores, caring roles. These potential stresses have a knock on effect and could impact on the Child or Young Person. These factors could change the expectations and dynamics within the home and add increased pressure.



Children will be exposed, through listening, observing or experiencing, to the responses, reactions and actions of the stay at home parent/carer.

They may feel stress or pressure as they absorb their parents' anxiety, upset or stress. This may impact on the Child or Young Person's own wellbeing and could cause a build up and layering of potential anxiety or stress.

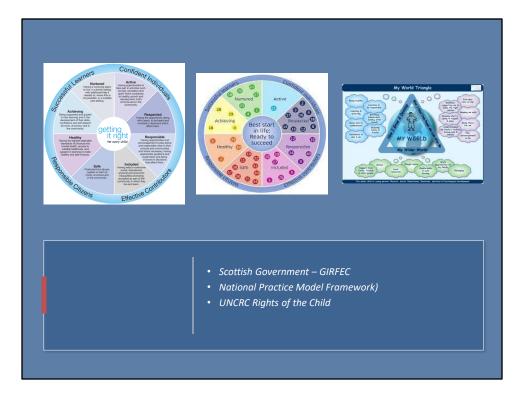
Deployment/separation may temporarily disrupt the safe and secure feelings and routines of home that may normally exist for the Child and Young Person. Rest and Recuperation (known as R&R) can also, for some, cause emotional disruption/imbalance for a Child or Young Person. Parents may want to take their Child or Young Person out of school during term time when the serving parent returns for R&R, or at the pre/post deployment stage. Slide 17 provides a link to Head Teachers Guidance for term time pupil absence.

The impact of deployment may cause parents to get anxious and this could change their relationship and approach to the school and therefore increased supportive communication, contact and connections with parents may be helpful.

Children and Young People may also be hearing, watching or reading news from various sources of social media which can often be inaccurate, exaggerated or from an unreliable source. Social media surrounds our Children and Young People 24hours

a day and access can often be out with the control of the stay at home parent/carer. Children and Young People are curious and although they may have information shared with them about a deployment they may also look to explore information further independently. Further information can be found at Highland School's online safety centre

https://www.highland.gov.uk/news/article/14154/highland_school_s_online_safety_ centre



Meeting needs is universal.

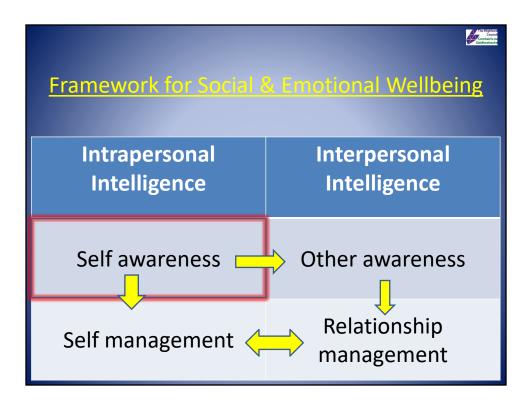
We can however predict that when a parent in the Armed Forces is sent on a Deployment, there may be some level of impact at some point on a Child or Young Person's wellbeing.

There are specific issues to consider for Children and Young People of Armed Forces Families and it is helpful to be prepared to increase support as needed at identified and specific times. As Educators and Practitioners we use the GIRFEC National Model Framework and support Children and Young People holistically using the interconnected Wellbeing Wheel and My World Triangle which are underpinned by the UNCRC Rights of the Child.

We know that most Children and Young People will be ok. Some may have or are being supported to develop good coping mechanisms and increasing resilience. However, there may be times when a Child or Young Person may need on-going or additional nurturing support and/or input. You may want to consider a more extended emotional wellbeing check in/out. Specific times i.e., deployment, may need further support. It may be helpful if there is a specific adult identified for the Child or Young Person to be able to go to with planned check in times/availability but also at times this may need to be increased and be more flexible/adhoc. Positive parental relationships are essential to promote working together in order to meet the needs of the Children and Young People and gain a wider understanding of their world and the challenges and pressures they may face.

Therefore advanced information sharing between home and education settings regarding an upcoming Deployment or extended Training exercise can help ensure potential needs are anticipated and met during this period. A helpful form for Education settings to make available to families is, "Notice of Parental Deployment. Links to this form and the Head Teacher advice for term time absence can be found on slide 14 or on Highland Council's Armed Forces website within the Education Section.

The Army Welfare Team and Unit Welfare Officer 3SCOTS based at Wimberley Way, Inverness are key Core Partners to the MLG (Education) group. They have built positive relationships within many of Highland's Education settings and can provide valuable information and on-going supportive advice to you as Educators. If you would like to make contact with this team please get in touch in the first instance with MLG Lead, Lou Kinnear Louise.kinnear2@highland.gov.uk who will be able to connect you with these teams.



To understand how we can best support Children and Young People in their social emotional wellbeing we need to understand their needs.

This slide shows the 4-part framework for social and emotional wellbeing (adapted from Goleman's Model of Emotional Literacy).

People with *intrapersonal intelligence* are skilled at self-reflection and know themselves very well. They are in touch with themselves, who they are, what they need and what they can accomplish. In other words, they have the ability to understand themselves, appreciate their own feelings, fears and motivations.

Interpersonal intelligence is the ability to understand and interact effectively with others. It involves effective verbal and nonverbal communication, the ability to note distinctions among others, sensitivity to the moods and temperaments of others, and the ability to entertain multiple perspectives.

You will see from the area highlighted and the arrows that Self Awareness is the starting point.

Self awareness is key to understanding their own emotions and how they effect our behaviour.

At times expectations can be for a pupil to regulate their emotions but if they are not self-aware, they will not have an understanding, strategies or coping mechanisms to

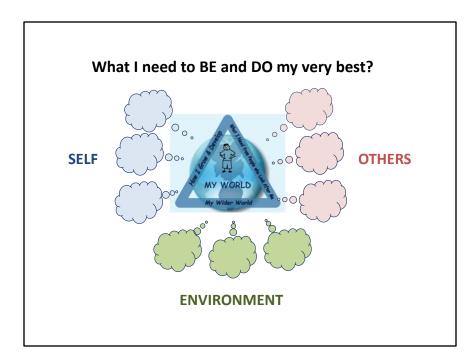
self manage their feelings.

As we support and promote a pupil's sense of self (self-awareness, sense of belonging, sense of personal power), they are more able to self manage and self esteem becomes more rooted.

The development of self-awareness enables a pupil to be able to understand themselves more deeply and with adult support through co-regulation they will become more able to self regulate, which in turn will positively allow them to develop meaningful and trusted relationships.

Social emotional, health and wellbeing is underpinned by emotional literacy and our ability to manage ourselves and our relationships

This is equally the case for children, young people and adults



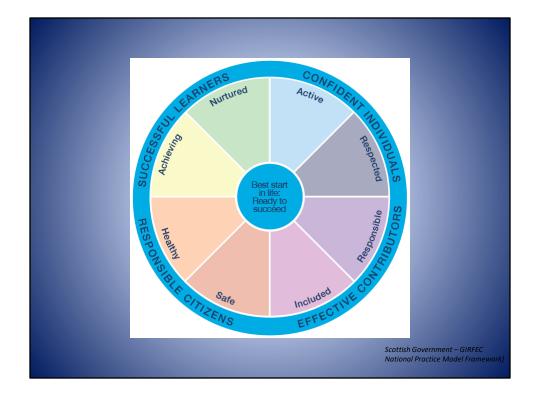
Understanding our own needs supports our Health & Wellbeing and provides a deeper self awareness

If we have a holistic understanding of ourselves, our feelings, our needs we better understand what we need in order to be and do our very best and reach our goals.

We need to think about every child's needs and in particular those who may need additional support due to a Deployment/Separation.

All children should be supported to have and understand their own My World Triangle – this is a framework we as educators use and children whether they have a Child's Plan or not should be given the supported opportunity to understand their World Triangle and how it links to their Wellbeing (SHANARRI) and UNCRC – this provides an opportunity to empower children.

Working with a Child or Young Person to consider their needs using the My World Triangle framework provides an empowering support that hears, listens and supports Children and Young people to have their needs met.



The My World Triangle is immersed within Wellbeing, the SHANARRI framework.

Think about the reflections you made in response to watching the video and the key messages conveyed by Children and Young People and consider how you could support them in your setting during times of deployment/separation.

- It may be helpful to use the Wellbeing Wheel (SHANARRI) framework on this slide to help you to consider all areas of a Child or Young Person's wellbeing.
- It may also be helpful to think about how these needs can be met with consideration to the Framework for Social and Emotional Wellbeing (slide 8). By supporting and developing self awareness of our Children and Young People we can increase their understanding and development of their situation and how it makes them feel and respond and support towards looking after their feelings and develop their resilience

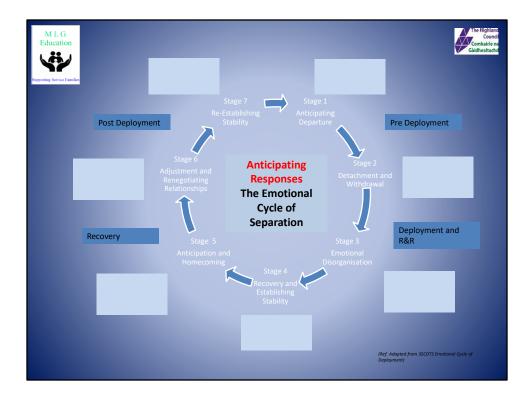
We need to be careful with our assumptions.

We cannot assume that just because a child has previously experienced separation or previously been through a deployment or that they have a 'weekending' parent that they are well versed and will cope.

We need to consider that some will be ok, or some may need extra support at this time to get their needs met.

Most pupils will be ok and have a good level of resilience however we need to be mindful that some, at certain times, may need some additional emotional support and opportunities to share and talk. Using the wellbeing wheel can support these conversations.

Each deployment/separation is unique and each family's dynamics, reactions and feelings will be unique, so we need to consider, support and meet the child or young person where they are at.



leave prior to deployment and again on their return to spend with their families. When the Soldier leaves on deployment, the Battalion or Unit will generally be based for up to 3 months at a training camp for preparation and assessment prior to deployment.

Every situation is unique, every family is unique and for Children and Young People to understand the separation that deployment brings, it is important that they are part of their families conversation and made aware of and given an understanding of how things may change at home. Sharing how they will communicate with their parent when away, how their routines might change, the length of the deployment etc..

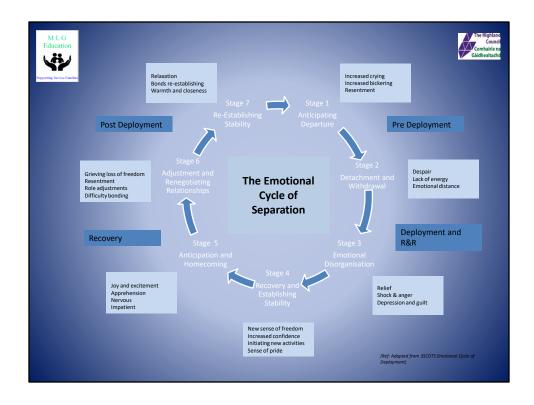
To support, understand and process change, Children and Young People need to feel and be included in this "Journey of change"

As you will see from this slide there are four main corner stones of deployment: Pre, Deployment, Recovery and Post. The cycle moves through these corner stones over 7 stages with each stage predicting a potentially emotional response. As mentioned previously some Children and Young People will be ok most of the time but some may need additional support some of the time or at certain key stages. Consideration of some flexibility in expectations may help at certain times especially pre/post deployment to give the family as a whole a chance to be together again.

Consider the Stages of Separation as detailed on the slide and note down your thoughts of:

- What you may hear or see from the Children and Young People emotionally?
- How might they communicate their needs?

Now move to the next slide which details the anticipated responses.



Compare the notes you have made of anticipated responses you may see to the possible examples detailed on this Slide.

- How do these compare?
- How could you respond to and support these needs that are being communicated using the GIRFEC Framework explored in previous slides?

As mentioned previously this model is based on the 3SCOTS Army Cycle of Deployment – it provides a framework that helps settings to consider how best to meet anticipated needs of Children and Young People.

When there is an anticipated deployment, education settings with identified pupils from the Battalion/Unit that is being deployed can request a deployment pack. If you would like to access one please contact MLG (Education) Lead, Lou Kinnear: louise.kinnear2@highland.gov.uk

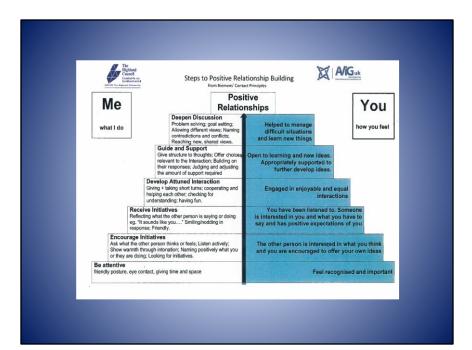
MLG (Education) provides, as directed by 3SCOTS, an information briefing note and sources of support for Education and Learning across Highland

There are similarities but also huge differences across the Armed Forces Services in

relation to deployment/separation. For example in relation to communication:

- Navy Submarine Units may be away with little or no contact for several months.
- Army Front Line Operational Tours limited communication, greater risk of injury causing increased levels of anxiety for the family at home.
- RAF dependent on location and purpose, communication may be restricted for security reasons.

A helpful and detailed document that explores this Cycle of Separation in more detail has been written by The Naval Families Federation "Making Sense of the Emotional Cycle of Deployment". This document provides information which is transferrable across all three Services. In addition to this, further reading of interest may be "The Parenting Cycle of Deployment" research paper by DeVoe & Ross (2012). These documents can be referenced on Slide 17.



or signpost you to the right person best placed to provide support.

If you have any questions in relation to this training, or require further support and information, or if you would like a specific slide to use as a resource, please contact MLG (Education) Lead, Lou Kinnear: louise.kinnear2@highland.gov.uk.

Thank you

Terminology – some useful terms that are familiar to Armed Forces families.

Rest and recuperation (R&R) is a way by which serving personnel may take authorized regular time off, it provides them with a break from the hazardous, isolated, and stressful working situations under which they perform.

Deployment can mean different things, depending on service personnel's job, unit and service branch. Generally, deployment means a scheduled time away from normal duty. It may mean months on a Navy ship, months at a forward operating base in a conflict zone, or other, sometimes in dangerous situations. The deployment cycle starts when a service personnel is notified of a deployment and extends through any predeployment training, the actual deployment, and reunion and reintegration. Every deployment cycle is different.

Weekending refers to non-operational separations, frequent and sustained over long periods of time. New research indicates that the effects of weekending on spouses and children matched those of longer deployments, affecting relationships, spousal employment, and general wellbeing. This is particularly prevalent for naval families.

Assignment Order/ Posting / Duty Assignment – the intent of the orders is to give the serving person instructions for getting to their next assignment; outlining the duty that they are assigned to perform. Accompanied means the family are included with the serving personnel in the move to new location. Un-Accompanied means the serving person will move to the new location (duty assignment) on their own, leaving family settled elsewhere.

Service Family Accommodation (SFA) is provided by the MOD so that the service personnel can live as close to their duty station as possible and live married accompanied. Housing is often allocated in an area of similar accommodation, sometimes referred to as 'the patch'.

Additional terms are available in this resource, ADES Leading Education for Armed Forces Children - Glossary Additional terms are available in this resource, ADES Leading Education for Armed Forces Childrenseducation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/ADES-2018-Leading-Education-for AFCs

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References to Information, Resources and Research

Highland Council Armed Forces Website Click Here Highland Armed Forces Community Covenant Click Here Notice of Parental Absence (Deployment) form for Parents ADES (detailed version) Click Her Notice of Parental Absence (Deployment) form for Parents (short version) Click Here Head Teacher Guidance for term time pupil absence Click Here Parental Absence Resource relevant to all services Click Here Books for separation and deployment Click Here Defence Childrens Services Click Here Navy Fam Feds – "Making Sense of the Emotional Cycle of Deployment" <u>Click Here</u> Army Fam Feds – "Families Deployment Support Guide" <u>Click Here</u> RAF Fam Feds – "Serving Families Deployment" Click Here The Parenting Cycle of Deployment Click Here The Impact of Fathers' Military Deployment on Child Adjustment <u>Click Here</u> The Affect of Non Operational Family Separations" NFF <u>Click Here</u> Leaflet to encourage families to identify at Enrolment Click Here Speech and Language Fast Track service Click Here UNCRC Summary of Rights Click Here GIRFEC National Practice Model Framework Click Here GIRFEC Framework Wellbeing Click Here

Contact Information

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Promoting Positive Relationships Coordinator Education & Learning Highland Council

Operational education link for Armed Forces and Lead for Highland Council's Military Liaison Group (Education)





<u>Click Here</u> to go direct to Highland Council's Armed Forces Website or go direct to the "Schools Hub"

